Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEA-10 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /094 W

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R 211440Z FEB 78 FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5240 INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA AMEMBASSY LONDON AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO AMEMBASSY TEHERAN

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EO 11652: GDS TAGS: PEPR, KE, IR SUBJECT: IRANIAN BREAK WITH KENYA

- 1. IN CONVERSATION WITH BILL HARROP AND MYSELF ON FEBRUARY 20, FOREIGN MINISTRY PERMANENT SECRETARY NG'ANG'A EXPRESSED KENYAN REGRET AT IRAN'S RASH ACTION IN SEVERING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. SAID KENYA HOPED MOVE WOULD BE RECONSIDERED, AND IMPLIED THAT KENYA WOULD NOT BE DISPLEASED IF WE PASSED ON THIS WORD TO THE IRANIANS.
- 2. NG'ANG'A SAID THAT HE WAS SURPRISED THAT "SQUABBLE BETWEEN IRANIAN AMBASSADOR TAVAKOLI AND THE LOCAL PRESS" SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT GOI TO POINT OF RUPTURE WITH KENYA.
- 3. COMMENT: WE SUSPECT THAT GOK WAS NOT COMPLETELY SURPRISED BY IRANIAN ACTIONS, SINCE TEMPERS HAVE BEEN A LITTLE SHORT ON BOTH SIDES DIRUNG RECENT TIMES BECAUSE OF KENYA'S OUTSPOKEN CRITICISM OF IRANIAN SUPPORT FOR SOMALIA. WE BELIEVE THAT KENYA WOULD, IN FACT, BE PERFECTLY AGREEABLE TO SEEING THE IRANIAN DECISION REVERSED OR RELATIONS REESTABLISHED CONFIDENTIAL

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IN THE NEAR FUTURE. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT KENYA WOULD AGREE TO SILENCE ITS CRITICISM OF IRANIAN ACTIVITIES IN THE HORN, AND THEREFORE WE WOULD ESTIMATE THERE IS BUT LITTLE HOPE OF PATCHING THINGS UP UNTIL THE HORN CONFLICT IS SETTLED.

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